

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 EB-07 OIC-02 ERDA-05 /079 W

----- 108040

R 121626Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5386

INFO AMEMBASSY ANDARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 10150

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MPOL, NATO, PFOR, BE

SUBJECT: HAGUE EUROGROUP MEETING; BELGIAN VIEWS.

REFS: (A) STATE 226238 (B) THE HAGUE 4670 (C) USNATO 6091

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING ARE BELGIAN VIEWS ON RESULTS AND
IMPLICATIONS OF EUROPGROUP MEETING IN THE HAGUE, NOV 6.
END SUMMARY.

1. WE DISCUSSED EUORPGROUP MEETING WITH
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ONE OF BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY PARTICIPANTS ONNOV 12.

FOLLOWING ARE HIS VIEWS, REFLECTING THOSE
OF BELGIAN GOVERNMENT, ON PURPOSE AND IMPLICATIONS
OF MEETING: (A) MAIN PURPOSE OF EUROGROUP, THOUGH
UNSTATED AT THE HAGUE, WAS TO FIND WAY TO BRING
FRANCE INTO CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER EUROPGROUP
COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE BETTER EUROPEAN COORDINATION IN
ARMAMENTS FIELD. (B) TO THIS END,
EUROGROUP COUNTRIES ARE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE
RAISON D'ETRD FOR EUROGROUP'S EXISTENCE IF FRANCE IS
WILLING TO JOIN IN THEIR WORK OUTSIDE OF EUROGROUP
FRAMEWORK. EUROGROUP REALIZES THAT FRANCE WILL
UNDER NO PRESENTLY FORESEEABLE CIRCUMSTANCES JOIN
EUROGROUP AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED. BELGIANS FORESEE
WITHERING, BUT NO DISAPPEARANCE, OF EUROGROUP IF
FRENCH ELECT TO PARTICIPATE IN NEW INITIATIVE.
(C) BELGIANS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ESTABLISHMENT
OF A FUNCTIONING EUROPEAN DEFENSE PROCUREMENT
SECRETARIAT, IF ACCOMPLISHED, WOULD LEAD TO CONFRON-
TATION BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE US. ON CONTRARY,
BELGIANS BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE
"TWO WAY STREET" TO REORGANIZE EUROPEAN ARMS
INDUSTRIES SO THAT THEY ARE OF A SCALE SUFFICIENT TO BE
ABLE TO SERVICE POTENTIAL US MARKET. IN PRESENT
SITUATION, EUROPEAN ARMS INDUSTRIES ARE
IN NO POSITION TO FURNISH THE US WITH SIGNIFICANT
QUANTITIES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT EVEN IF US ORDERS
WERE PLACED. (D) IN SAME WAY, BELGIANS DO NOT
LOOK UPON EUROGROUP INITIATIVE AS MEANS BY WHICH THEY
HOPE TO PROTECT THEIR INDUSTRY FROM COMPETITION. LONG
RUN ADVANTAGES OF PROTECTING PRESENT INDUSTRIES ARE
MINOR COMPARED TO POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES OFFERED BELGIAN
INDUSTRY BY OPENING OF US MARKET SHOULD "TWO WAY
STREET" BE ACHIEVED. (E) BELGIANS BELIEVE THAT
FRENCH REALIZE THAT FRANCE'S LONGTERM INTERESTS
WOULD ALSO BE BETTER SERVED BY "TWO WAY STREET",
TO ACHIEVE THICH BELGIANS HOPE FRANCE WILL COOPERATE
WITH EUROGROUP COUNTRIES IN NEW FRAMEWORK. PURPOSE OF
NEW FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL IS TO MAKE INTEGRATION OF FRENCH
EARMAMENTS INDUSTRIES WITH OTHER EUROPEAN ONES
POLITICALLY PALATABLE. (F) BELGIANS SEE NO
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DISADVANTAGES TO NATO IN PROPOSED NEW FRAMEWORK.
AS MEANS BETTER TO DIVIDE ARMAMENTS PRODUCTION
BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE US, BELGIANS SEE PROPOSAL
AS A WAY FOR EUROPEANS TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY WITH
US THUS REMOVING STIGMA THAT THEY ARE ONLY JUNIOR
PARTNERS IN ALLIANCE AND CAN ONLY HOPE TO BE
SUB-CONTRACTORS FOR US INDUSTRY. BELGIANS STRESS
PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF ACHIEVING THIS

CHANGE IN ORDER TO PRESERVE ALLIANCE. (G) ON
ATMOSPHERICS AT THE HAGUE, BELGIANS TOLD US THAT
DUTCH DEL, BRITISH CHAIRMAN MASON, FRG DEL CHIEF
LEBER AND THEIR DEL, WERE THE ONLY ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS,
THE OTHERS GOING ALONG. FIRESTONE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PROCUREMENT, POLICIES, MEETING DELEGATIONS, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRUSSE10150
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750394-0637
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751151/aaaabttt.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 226238, 75 THE HAGUE 4670, 75 NATO BRUSSELS 6091
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <25 SEP 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HAGUE EUROGROUP MEETING; BELGIAN VIEWS.
TAGS: MILI, MPOL, PFOR, BE, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006